

PRESS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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PRAYERS ANSWERED: INMATES GET CHAPEL

Inmates acquire new skills while building their place of worship

Frankfort, KY – "Feed a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach the man to fish and he will eat for a lifetime." This old Chinese proverb beautifully sums up the theme for a new chapel which will be constructed **for** inmates and **by** inmates who reside at the Frankfort Career Development Center (FCDC), a state-run minimum-security prison.

A groundbreaking ceremony marking the beginning of construction for the new chapel will be held on Sunday, December 3, at 3:30 p.m. at FCDC, located at 380 Coffee Tree Road in Frankfort. FCDC inmates will be trained with new skills while constructing their place of worship. These marketable skills will assist them in finding gainful employment once they are released from the Department of Corrections' (DOC) custody. A recent study conducted by Eastern Kentucky University shows that the current rate of recidivism for inmates who participate in institutional work programs such as this one is 13 ½%. The average recidivism rate is 33%.

The idea for the new chapel began in 1997 when inmates at FCDC expressed a need and began praying for an adequate place to hold their worship services. The current place of worship, a multi-purpose building, was thought to be too distracting due to inmate traffic flow.

Fundraising began when FCDC Chaplain Earl Bell contacted area churches and individuals to contribute. The FCDC inmate chapel choir sang in the area churches and then afterwards Chaplain Bell would present the need for the chapel and the people responded. Twenty-seven area churches and private individuals are providing the financial assistance for the new chapel at the Frankfort minimum-security prison for men. A total of \$73,680.00 was raised between November 9, 1999 through July 15, 2000.

Two DOC staff members drew the plans and prepared the list of materials with anticipated costs for the chapel construction.

DOC East Regional Director Carol Williams, FCDC Warden John Sowders, Deputy Warden Wayne Dunn and Chaplain Bell will participate in Sunday's groundbreaking ceremony. Representatives from the 27 churches in the surrounding counties will be honored guests. Public is invited to attend.

The plan is to complete the construction for the new chapel in late spring 2001. The Worship Center will have a seating capacity of 85 and the facility will be used exclusively as a Worship and Education Center.